



State of Nevada Department of Business & Industry

TERRY JOHNSON, Director
555 East Washington Avenue, Suite 4900
Las Vegas, Nevada 89101
Phone (702) 486-2750 | Fax (702) 486-2758
www.business.nv.gov

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CONTACT: Elisabeth Daniels, Public Information Officer

PHONE: (702) 486-2756 E-MAIL: edaniels@business.nv.gov

Mortgage Lending Division takes action against loan mod scammers targeting Hispanic community

Las Vegas – The Mortgage Lending Division of the Nevada Department of Business & Industry has ordered two foreclosure relief companies to cease and desist operations as a result of offering bogus loan modification assistance, primarily to Hispanic and Spanish-speaking homeowners.

The Division has ordered Majestic Group, LLC, and Nevada Sky Premier, LLC, along with Jose Benjamin Rodriguez, to stop all advertising, offering and providing of any loan modification services to consumers. Majestic, New Sky and Rodriguez were soliciting homeowners to participate in their “New Start Program,” which they claimed would stop foreclosure or deliver a modification of their mortgage. Little or no work was done on behalf of the homeowners, and for some, foreclosure proceedings went forward despite their payments to the companies. The scammers targeted a significant portion of their marketing to Hispanic homeowners who spoke Spanish.

“Companies that prey on distressed homeowners will not be tolerated in Nevada,” said Mortgage Lending Commissioner James Westrin. *“The Division will act swiftly and firmly to ensure that these bad actors are shut down.”*

In addition to issuing the Cease & Desist Order, the Division imposed a fine of \$50,000 and ordered that the companies make restitution to two injured consumers.

Homeowners who may have been victimized by Majestic, Nevada Sky or Rodriguez – or those with a complaint about another mortgage loan modification business– are encouraged to call the Division at (702) 486-0782 to file a complaint. Spanish-speakers may call the Ombudsman for Minority Affairs Christina Fuentes at (702) 486-4575.

The Division reminds homeowners that, in most instances, it's illegal to pay up-front for foreclosure relief assistance, and further, you never have to pay for this type of help at all. Mortgage assistance is available for free through certified housing counselors. For a list of counselors, go to <http://HomeMeansNevada.nv.gov/Homeowner/>.

Should you prefer to work with a foreclosure relief company or other loan modification consultant, rather than a counselor, company licensing status can be verified on the Division's website at <http://mld.nv.gov> or by calling (702) 486-0782.

Signs of a Loan Modification Scam

Homeowners seeking loan modification services need to be aware of the signs of a scam. The Mortgage Lending Division recommends that if you're looking for a loan modification or other help to save your home, avoid any business that:

1. Guarantees to get you a loan modification or stop the foreclosure process no matter what your circumstances.
2. Tells you not to contact your lender, lawyer or housing counselor.
3. Tells you to make your mortgage payments to the loan modification service, rather than your lender.
4. Claims that all or most of its customers get loan modifications or mortgage relief.
5. Asks for an up-front fee before providing you with any services.
6. Accepts payment only by cashier's check or wire transfer.
7. Encourages you to lease your home so you can buy it back over time.
8. Tells you to transfer your property deed or title to it.
9. Offers to buy your house for cash for much lower than the selling price of similar houses in your neighborhood, or pressures you to sign papers you haven't had a chance to read thoroughly or that you don't understand.

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